

1.4 Ancient Greece



Ancient Greece

- After our previous experience examining the characteristics and defining features of religion, we are entering a world of “religion at work

Overall Expectations

RBV.03 analyze and describe the connection between the human experience and sacred writings and oral teachings

HEV.01 Identify the function of religion in human experience

ISV.05 Communicate the results of these inquiries effectively

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- The focus of this activity is to provide you with the opportunity to examine the practice of religion in one of its earliest forms
- Keep the question “What is religion?” in the back of your mind in this chapter

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Mythology

- Even today, the **mythology** of Ancient Greece captivates readers of all ages
- Myths created by the Greeks help to explain their origins and also the mechanisms of the natural world that they did not understand

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- What is **mythology**
- In folkloristics, a **myth** is a sacred narrative usually explaining how the world or humankind came to be in its present form, although, in a very broad sense, the word can refer to any traditional story.

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Mythology

- We know more about our world today than the ancient Greeks knew about theirs

Ex.....

Mythology served many purposes, which included helping people understand their purposes on earth and the functions of nature

Ancient Greece

Important Considerations

1. The Greeks believed Gods to be **anthropomorphic**
- **Anthropomorphism** refers to the perception of a divine being or beings in human form, or the recognition of human qualities in these beings

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Important Considerations

The Gods fought, laughed, cried and had both strengths and weaknesses

Very clearly the Gods had human characteristics

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Important Considerations

- 2. It was believed that the Gods controlled absolutely everything
- From weather to successful trade, the Gods were ever present and all influencing

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Important Considerations

3. Although there were many different shrines and temples dedicated to many gods, people usually went on their own to ask for a deity's blessing or to ask for forgiveness

There was no organized church or powerful religious class or leaders

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Important Considerations

4. In most parts of Ancient Greece, religious festivals were quite common and eccentric.

Sometimes whole villages or cities would shut down to celebrate or honor the gods

Celebrations would include music, dancing, singing and some forms of competition

Ancient Greece

Important Considerations

- The Greeks believed in a **Soul**.
- Although they believed that the afterlife was rather dark and dreary, they went to great lengths to prepare the deceased for their journey to the underworld.